

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs News Release



May 27, 2020

Spokane – This week the Spokane Veterans Home will welcome a number of residents back from the Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center. Several residents will return each day and transition from the COVID-19 Unit at the VA Medical Center to the Spokane Veterans Home COVID-19 Recovery Wing.

The Spokane Veterans Home COVID-19 Recovery Wing is separated from the rest of the Home and residents will continue with a 14-day quarantine where only dedicated staff will provide care while using appropriate PPE. Once two negative tests are collected 24 hours apart, residents will be able to move back into their own room.

The Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center and Spokane Veterans Home partnership serving COVID-19 positive residents from the Spokane Veterans Home has provided an enhanced level of medical care, support, surveillance, stabilization and treatment for early signs of clinical deterioration due to Coronavirus infection for individuals most at risk for complications of COVID-19 infection. It also offered the opportunity for the Spokane Veterans Home to deep clean and ensure the facility is ready to welcome our Veterans and family members Home. These measures have been successful in stemming the outbreak at Veterans Home, with no new COVID-19 cases in residents since May 7 and staff since May 11.

In regard to welcoming residents home, the [CDC recommends](#) one of 2 strategies:

- Time-based strategy: 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.
- Test-based strategy: Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens).

To date, eight residents have returned using the test-based strategy (7 from the VAMC, 1 from a local hospital). We are finding that residents are continuing to test positive for long periods of time. In order to proceed with an abundance of caution and in recognition of the unique needs of this elderly population, the Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center and Spokane Veterans Home have consulted with the Department of Health and the Spokane Regional Health District and have reached a decision to discharge utilizing the guidance below, which continues to meet and/or exceed recommendations from the CDC, Department of Health and the Spokane Regional Health District. We are confident these measures will serve the needs of the returning residents, our current residents, and our staff.

It is important to remember that many of these residents have been away from their home for almost a month and have expressed their desire to return home. Isolation for many weeks from family, friends, and now caregivers who in many cases have become a part of their extended family, has made an already difficult situation even more challenging and we believe it is in their best interest to allow a return home under the following conditions:

- Resident wants to return to the Spokane Veterans Home
- COVID-19 signs and symptoms free for a minimum of 14 days
- At least 30 days have passed from the first positive COVID-19 test, or the resident has been at the VA for 30 days
- Resident is not receiving nor is anticipated to require aerosolizing procedures (e.g. nebulizer treatments, etc.) on return to SVH

Our entire Spokane Veterans Home family is excited to begin welcoming residents Home! WDVA will post photos to our social media sites as residents return home. Not all residents appreciate having their photos taken, especially as they are transported from one medical facility to another so we ask the media to please respect the privacy of residents and share only photos that have been posted to our [flickr page](#).

Additional information is available on our website at www.dva.wa.gov/covid.

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